

Terrible scenes were to be witnessed in the camps amid these drunken orgies. Intoxicated Indians ran naked, stabbing and shooting each other, cutting themselves and killing their wives and children. When Bishop Laval arrived in the country in 1659, the Algonkins could muster 2,000 warriors; and in 1705, chiefly through the use of brandy, they could not muster 200 fighting men.

In the early history of the Canadian North-West, liquor was used by the native population to a great extent, resulting in debauchery and crime. Henry's Journal, as published by C. N. Bell, says: "A common dram shop in a civilized country is a Paradise in comparison to the Indian trade when two or more interests were engaged." Drinking matches were frequently held by the natives, during which serious fights took place and some of the Indians were killed. Henry says that during the winter of 1801-2, stabbing affrays resulting from drinking matches were of frequent occurrence. Again it is said: An Indian arrived with his family in a small canoe, in fifteen days, from Leech Lake (now in Minnesota), and brings intelligence from that place of several Salteaux having murdered each other in a drinking match a few days before he left. This caused a terrible uproar in the camp here, the murdered persons being near relatives of some here. There were also persons related to the murderers. The former would insist upon retaliating, and it was with the greatest trouble that we prevented them by taking away their arms. They were all drunk, and kept up a most terrible crying, screaming, howling and lamenting the death of their relatives. The liquor only tended to augment their false grief.

Even in the lodges of the dead, liquor was used to assuage grief. In this they are not alone, for in some parts of England, Ireland and Scotland, at the present day, strong drink is used at every domestic festival. Births, marriages and deaths are occasions upon which the visitors are treated to wine, whiskey and other liquors. We read in Henry's Journal, "Bea's Courts daughter (a Salteaux girl) died, aged nine years. Great lamentations, and they must have a keg of whiskey to wash away the grief from their hearts, and a fathom of cloth to cover the body and a quarter of a pound of vermilion to paint the same." The writer has been compelled to say with reluctance that a white settlement in the vicinity of an Indian reserve or mission is a curse to the natives, and greater prosperity will attend the ministrations of the teachers of Christian truth, upon missions far distant from the homes of the civilized pale-faces. As in our day, so also did Henry observe nearly a hundred years ago. The Columbia River Indians, and the tribes in the interior parts of the country, were not addicted to vice as were the eastern tribes. The less the Indians came in contact with the white people, the more highly were they esteemed for their morality. The chief cause of their depravity was the liquor, which was furnished them by the white people, and the example shown them by the vaunted